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Annual Subscription, inclusive
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Half yearly Subscription, Rs. 3.

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Hon. Editor : Sri A. N. PARASURAM, M.A.

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The Educational Review

A MONTHLY RECORD FOR INDIA

VOL. LVIII.

AUGUST 1952

8

Teacher Growth Through Refresher Courses*

Lecturer in Education, Government Training College, Kozhikode.

BY DR. H. S. S. LAWRENCE M.A., ED. D. (Columbia), M. E. S.

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Public Instruction, Madras, while introducing the new syllabuses of the Reorganised Scheme of Secondary Education, points out:—

“It is most important that the teacher should realise that the scheme embodies a new spirit, a new evaluation of values and a new approach. The infusion of a new spirit is more important than the imparting of fresh items of information. New syllabuses taught with the old values and approach in mind will be little, if any improvement, on the present system. They may indeed be worse.”¹

The above passage clearly shows that the scheme for the reorganization of secondary education in Madras makes a new demand upon teachers in service. The Department of Public Instruction looks forward essentially to a change on the part of the teachers in their outlook on education, that should bring about the best in our children and youth. Teachers should develop the new spirit of growth demanded of them.

Refresher Courses, a part of In-service Education.

Refresher courses are a means towards providing for teacher growth in service. It

must be recognized at the outset however, that refresher courses alone do not contribute enough to the professional growth of teachers. Refresher courses cannot be regarded as synonymous with in-service teacher education. While indeed more and better refresher courses are necessary, there is definitely the need for various other in-service education programmes as well.

The teachers' colleges are primarily concerned with the provision of education for the B. T. Degree and have done little towards the growth of teachers working in the schools after graduation and training. They have not assumed responsibility for providing programmes for the in-service education of teachers. But a study of a few subjects including practice teaching cannot make a teacher good for life. The teachers' college should be the “nerve centre” where in-service education of all types and sorts is provided for the teachers working in the areas around. This is the way by which teachers' colleges and schools are enabled to come together. Here is the opportunity for the “producers” and “consumers” to get together.

The only idea which has found a place in the recommendations of many Education Committees as regards in-service education

* A paper read at the last Madras State Education Conference.

1. Department of Public Instruction, *General Introduction to the New Syllabuses*, Madras.

is the one relating to the introduction of refresher courses. The Central Advisory Board of Education in 1949, the Madras University Reorganising Committee in 1945 and the National Planning Committee in 1948, rightly emphasised the importance of refresher courses in keeping trained teachers up-to-date. In spite of these recommendations and though there is a great need for bringing up-to-date the vast number of teachers who have been in service some years, the refresher courses actually provided have been few. The ones offered have been inadequate for the large number of teachers in service. Often, they are offered only when some professors volunteer to give them or when a new specialist is freely available.

The latest position is analysed by the University Education Commission appointed by the Government of India :

"An urgent reform is the institution of vacation refresher courses for high-school and intermediate college teachers. At present neither students nor teachers utilise their vacation: for most of them vacation is a period of want of occupation.....The Madras Government used to have vacation courses at Ootacamund for some years, but we were told that they have also been discontinued."²

Organization and Administration of Refresher Courses :—

It is worthwhile to know first of all the position in England where the use of refresher courses for teachers is well stressed. The Board of Education, in calling for systematic arrangement so that teachers may attend refresher courses, says :—

"The courses are conducted by training colleges and university training departments, by local education authorities and by independent organizations. The Board also through the agency of H. M. Inspectors held a number of

courses.....The courses may be full-time lasting two or three weeks or even a full term; or they may be part-time courses held in the evenings or at weekends. In 1938 approximately 7000 teachers attended short full-time courses, 700 attended term courses and 47,000 part-time courses."³

In the organization and administration of refresher courses for teachers in Madras State, the following suggestions are made in general.

(1) The teachers' colleges should provide leadership along with Government Education Officers and professional organizations in the planning and operation of short-term courses for teachers of high-schools. Such courses should be much more than and different from just "refresher" courses as were provided in the past. They should be *real professional* courses. This will require that the faculty be alive to the progress made in educational theory and practice; that they also take full cognisance of the needs and demands of the teachers themselves.

(2) The Universities too should provide short-term courses for teachers in the schools and colleges. This is not the job of the teachers' colleges alone. Indeed, the Universities have a special responsibility towards those of their graduates who become school teachers. The University Education Commission, in recommending this, observes :—

"The University can thus become a real intellectual and spiritual home, to which its teacher alumni would love to come back for nutriment of mind and spirit."

(3) Where and when should such professional courses be provided? They could well be given in the teachers' colleges themselves, where facilities by way of libraries and equipment are available during the holidays. However, several hill stations and other healthy places can be used for

2. *The Report of the University Education Commission*. Government Printing Press, Delhi, 1949, Vol. 1, p. 95.

3. *Board of Education, Teachers and Youth Leaders*, London, H. M. Stationery Office, 1944, p. 17.

professional study and recreation. The best time for conducting refresher courses will be the holidays when teachers have no classroom work.

(4) The contents of short-term professional courses should be well-planned. Some of the important aspects of vacation courses are enumerated as follows:

a. Teachers should be made acquainted with latest developments in educational psychology and sociology, child guidance and mental hygiene.

b. Training in tests and measurements.

c. An understanding of the results of research and experiments.

d. An understanding of Educational Plans and Schemes supported or introduced by Government or other agencies.

e. Demonstrations, practical work, group living, discussions and visitations.

(5) Who should teach such short-term courses for teachers in service? The faculty of teachers' colleges and especially those who have had extensive training in foreign countries, are well fitted for the job. Nevertheless, the services of headmasters and experienced teachers who have carried out experiments successfully in school systems should be utilised.

(6) Refresher courses should not be mere lecture programmes. They must enlist the full participation of the teachers who attend and deal specially with their felt needs and problems in schools.

Provision of Incentives:—

It is highly important that educators and administrators should recognise more and more the importance of and the need for proper incentives for teacher growth in service. Incentives are essential, if teachers should decide about taking refresher and professional courses. There is of course the prime incentive to serve India in this great formative period of independence. Teachers should work well and better with a spirit of service to the motherland. Special emphasis

should be placed on what teachers can and should do as persons, citizens and professional workers by reason of the challenge of India's needs and opportunities today. The incentive must necessarily come from within.

But the inherent motivations must be supported by rewards for more effort and better quality of service. Modern India should be realistic enough to provide a ladder of increasing salaries and promotions for high-school teachers to climb step by step. The salary incentive must not be an end; it must nevertheless be a means to in-service education and better teaching. The incentive for teachers to undertake further education through refresher courses must be provided by giving higher salaries and promotions to those who take such courses creditably. If teachers are to be encouraged to take refresher courses or other studies, they must be given the necessary leaves of absence with travelling allowances and other conveniences. Provision of regular refresher and other short-term professional courses at teachers' colleges and universities is essential. It is also important that on return to school after taking refresher courses, the teachers should have chances to put into practice new ideas gained and spread new knowledge and skills learned.

"In order that the scheme of refresher courses may become a real success, the authorities of schools and intermediate colleges and the Government Education Departments should make certified attendance at a University refresher course once every four or five years a qualification for promotion. Some such stimulus would be necessary until attendance at such refresher courses becomes a tradition....."

Alternatively, teachers may be given leave of absence for six months after every five years of service and asked to attend advanced courses at their own or any other University and obtain a certificate of attendance and good work from the head of the department of the University."⁴

CONCLUSION

In India today teachers should grow as persons, citizens and as professional workers. They must keep up with educational improvement. In its wider sense, education is self-culture and self-improvement and the process should go on to the end of one's life. A teacher, while he is in service after training, should undertake further education. In-service teacher education helps the teacher to maintain the spirit of the learner.

Refresher courses are an important part of the in-service education programme. They form an important means whereby teachers can improve themselves. They should acquaint teachers with the latest methods and improvements in the educational world. But most important of all, the educationists concerned should provide the incentives necessary so that teachers would freely and gladly take refresher courses and want to be benefited by them.

Educational Experiments in Bombay State - I

BY PROFESSOR C. N. PATWARDHAN, B.A., HONS. (BOM); M. ED. (DUNELM.)

Professor and Head of the Department of Education Administration, Indian Institute of Education, Bombay.

PROVERBIALLY poor India is trying to solve her problems in the way that all poor people solve theirs i. e. by mutual co-operation and self-sacrifice. The experiments described here are a few of the many efforts in education undertaken by persons, well qualified and experienced in education, entirely on their own, without Government aid, and sadly enough at times in the teeth of official opposition. Names of institutions and persons, wherever the publication of such names is not desirable on any account, are not given, but the Editor is informed of the details of names of persons and institutions in all cases. Persons interested in the educational experiments as such, apart from the persons and institutions carrying them out, may, if so required, obtain necessary details from the Editor or from the present contributor.

The object of this account and of similar accounts as may be published in future is principally to acquaint educationists in India with what others are doing in the field of education. All educational experiments described here are non-governmental.

Experiment I:

JANATA VIDYALAYA, POONA

The object of this experiment is to solve the problem of poor but intelligent and

willing students of secondary school age, who for want of money cannot join a secondary school. 80% of the expense on secondary education, is on account of teachers' salaries. If by some method this expense can be reduced to the minimum, students can well complete their secondary education course at considerably less cost to themselves. The second item of heavy expenditure is building for the school. The third item of expenses for the students is the costly equipment they have to bring with them viz., about 20 note-books, fountain-pens, pencils etc., and the fourth item of expense is books. The last, but certainly not the least expense, is on tuition fees.

The Janata Vidyalaya has tried to reduce all expenses and impart good but cheap education by the following methods:—

Teachers: Retired Government officers of the Education Dept, who are superannuated under service rules, offered their free services to the Vidyalaya. These were joined by noted private school Headmasters of great repute, to whom also the superannuation rules were made applicable. This band of old but experienced and enthusiastic educationists has undertaken to conduct the Vidyalaya and without standing on any false sense of dignity, has commenced actual teaching as honorary workers in the

Vidyalaya. This is a challenge to the superannuation rule of service, but it is much more than a mere revolt of the so-called 'old'. It is apprising of the restless spirit of public service, bottled up for 30 years during government or private service. Pensioners formerly led a life of idle occupations or accepted honorary chairmanships, presidencies etc., of social organizations, but very few of them did day to day hard work in humble capacities. The Janata Vidyalaya workers have freed themselves from any such wrong conception of honour, dignity and prestige. Those who have been at the height of educational cadre in their service career, have accepted duties of an assistant teacher in the Vidyalaya. Fortunately, this band is joined by educated ladies, who would otherwise pass their time in sundry afternoon activities like playing cards, or organizing 'socials.' The Janata Vidyalaya has thus satisfactorily solved the question of salaries, as all teachers are honorary. Government pensions are thus well-utilised for a worthy cause. The present strength of the "old guard" is enough to last for the next five years.

Building: The Janata Vidyalaya has secured housing accommodation from another equally poor institution, the Anath Vidyarthi Griha, whose Principal is himself a great educationist and an elected member of the State Council representing teachers. The class rooms of this Griha and all other facilities are made available to the Janata Vidyalaya. No rent, except nominal lighting expenses, are charged. Thus a huge amount of money ordinarily sunk in brick and mortar is saved.

Less Costly Equipment: The Janata Vidyalaya students are instructed to use slate and pencil, but when they have to use paper, the Vidyalaya authorities have asked all students to use simple loose leaf files. Loose sheets of good ruled paper are sold at a cheap rate to students. The students take a few sheets home for work, as required, and the teachers after examination and correction of the students' work, file the sheets in the respective files, which are carefully preserved in school. A student has not to bring with him a load of note-

books, and the school has thus assured the maximum use of paper at the minimum cost. No fountain-pens, no costly note-books, no 'rough and fair' duplication of work, but much greater neatness, greater economy, greater efficiency and greater reliability of students' day to day work records are the prominent features of this experiment.

Expense on text-books: By collection of gift-books, the Vidyalaya has a sufficient stock of text-books. These books are allowed to be taken home when necessary. Ordinarily home-work is so well-planned that the students can do the work usually without reference to texts. Texts are used during school hours for intensive studies and the time devoted to these studies under the efficient supervision of teachers is found adequate for textual studies. When we consider the normal expense which a student has to incur for each year, this method of the Vidyalaya appears to be the best for a poor country like India. The same set of text-books goes round to serve other students from year to year.

Tuition Fees: With due economy effected in teachers' salaries, buildings, equipment etc., the Vidyalaya can well afford to keep its tuition fees very low. In a city like Poona, where normal fees are Rs. 5 for Standard VIII, the Vidyalaya charges only Rs. 2 p. m. All fee collections are used for purchase of school equipment.

There are no peons in the Vidyalaya. Students take their turns at cleaning, dusting etc. The school bell is also rung by students. This self-help is in itself a healthy school practice; it also helps the school in reducing expenses on an army of peons or menials required by other schools.

If we end the account of the Janata Vidyalaya just here, the experiment will appear at the most to be by way of an economical set-up of an ordinary school. Economical set-up is certainly one of the objectives of the experiment, but there is something more in the experiment which has high educational value. The challenge of the superannuated teachers to the Department of Education is on the basis of

educational efficiency secured in the school. The school examinations are proposed to be held by any authority, outside the school, which the department may appoint. The results achieved by such an external examination will show how there has been no loss in the standard of education. The organizers of the Vidyalaya expect a little more: they hope to reach a standard higher than that of other schools.

The experiment has to overcome certain departmental obstructions. The first objection will be that the teachers in the Vidyalaya are for all purposes of departmental rules beyond the age of employment, and yet they are the mainstay of the Vidyalaya. Will the department concede, the point of efficiency, irrespective of the age of the teacher? If they do, as they will have to, on inspection and examination of the school, the basic idea of superannuating teachers at a fixed age will have to be modified.

The second difficulty which lies in the way of this Vidyalaya is the comparatively low rate of fees charged. When fees are uniform in all schools of the locality, will the department permit a different lower rate of fees? If the lower rate of fees will be approved, it will mean admission of the fact that fees can be lowered, and the financial burden on the students can be and should be lessened by adopting new methods of school organization.

In these two important aspects of secondary education, equal efficiency and less cost, the Vidyalaya experiment will be watched by all educationists and the public alike with keen interest.

(Experiment II and Experiment III to be described in the next instalment, refer to "XII Standard—~~an~~ year's course in balanced education" and "Daily School Assembly and its use by the Headmaster in teaching Current Affairs" respectively).

The State's Educational Policy

By SRI R. SRINIVASA IYENGAR, B. A., L. T., *Principal, Srinivasa Tutorial, Coimbatore.*

THE Education Minister's statement in the Madras Legislative Assembly on the Budget demand under the head "Education" contains a review of the policy that was pursued by the Congress Ministries since 1946 and its repercussions on the present position. For the first time, a Congress Education Minister in Madras State has declared that the fundamental objective of providing universal free elementary education as laid down in the constitution would receive the highest priority in the Government's educational policy and that it is the accepted policy of the Government to see that a primary school is established in every village with a population of 500 or more. Dr. M. V. Krishna Rao's predecessors in the Congress Ministry have fought shy of using the term "universal free elementary education"; and one of them scorned the very idea of priorities in the

General and the Educational Budgets. C. R. himself, as Premier and Finance Minister, in his budget speech of 1939, stated that "in view of the financial implications, the introduction of universal elementary education was not a practical proposition at any rate for some years to come." It is to be apprehended that the objective may remain a pious hope, as the Minister explained that Rs. 1470 lakhs will be required per annum and invited the Legislative Assembly to offer suggestions as to how to augment the financial resources of the State so as to make increased provision for education.

The Education Minister has also stated that the Government will continue to utilise private agencies for the development of universal elementary education through the grant-system. Private agencies, barring solitary exceptions, have proved to be miserable failures for coping with the task

of expansion of elementary education. As uniform scales of pay are being urged for teachers under all managements, and as most private managements are unable to pay even three rupees per month to teachers over and above the grants, no purpose is served by the Government's seeking this agency for achieving the objective laid down in Article 45 of the Constitution. Further impoverishment of the bodies and souls of elementary school teachers cannot be tolerated. Private agencies have abundant scope in the fields of secondary and university education, but should not be permitted to thwart the Government's duty to nationalise and impart elementary education for all children in the state. Private enterprise in elementary education may be permitted only for conducting experiments or research of a unique type.

Finance is, indeed, a serious handicap in the way of our realising the goal laid down in the Constitution. Gandhiji showed himself a modern progressive educationist, when he enunciated at the Wardha Conference of 1937 that free compulsory education should last for a period of eight years. It is a matter for surprise why the Central Government have appointed a Commission to report on how secondary education could be improved. The Central Government has a responsibility in seeing that all the State Governments take immediate steps to attain the objective laid down in Article 45 of the Constitution. It is incumbent upon the Union Government to provide the necessary finance for enabling every child in India to learn to read and write before embarking upon adult and social education. Moulana Abdul Kalam Azad and his able secretaries should apply their minds to this urgent job waiting to be finished in about seven years. The State Governments should not pass on their responsibilities in this matter to other agencies, but themselves shoulder it with assistance from the Union Government. Nationalisation of elementary education is the only way to achieve universalisation of free elementary education.

The report on Burma of the three experts deputed by the UNESCO is helpful

to us in determining the period and the content of primary education. The experts suggest a five-year course, a year being 200 days of 5½ hours each, so that pupils may leave school at the age of 10 or 11 years for the farms. In our country, for some decades to come, the universalisation of primary education is feasible only with nationalisation of the same for children of the age-group 6-11 years. The nation will be satisfied if the State Governments set themselves to impart the five-years primary education to all children in the states.

The Education Minister, Dr. Krishna Rao, made an admission of great significance when he said that owing to the Government's policy of introducing basic education throughout the state, the compulsory elementary education scheme and maintained *status quo* since 1947-48. Gandhiji conceived his scheme of basic education for establishing universal education. Gandhiji wrote in 1937 in *Harizan*: "I am a firm believer in the principle of free and compulsory primary education for India. I also hold that we shall realize this only by teaching the children a useful vocation and utilising it as a means for cultivating their mental, physical and spiritual faculties. In no other way can primary education be made free, compulsory and effective. I am convinced that there is no other way to carry education to *crores* of our children. We cannot wait until we have the necessary revenue." But the two ideologies of basic and universal education have been treated by the Madras Government as distinctly separate, as may be seen also from the fact that there is one deputy-director for basic education and another deputy-director for elementary education. The present decision of the Government to review the present anomalous situation is to be welcomed. The basic education policy has, in fact, retarded universal education.

The present Government seem to have curious ideas of their own on basic and primary education. Evidently, they have no faith in schooling affording sufficient training to the intelligence, practical efficiency and a sense of moral and social values to the children. They are anxious to

establish proper co-ordination between the home and the school by the method of half-day schooling and half-day family apprenticeship in craft. The half-day schooling is not intended to secure the admission of more pupils and the adoption of the shift-system. Its object is to make pupils learn to be better-skilled craftsmen, and to enable teachers to take a supplementary occupation or to take part in the nation-building activities. We are a poor country; our children are perhaps more precocious; special methods are being invoked for imparting education to our children.

The implications of this novel proposal have to be carefully studied. Children will learn craft, not from teachers, but from parents in their homes; the possibility of their learning crafts in the school workshop to be attached is not to be ignored. The problem of starting an ordinary school bristles with difficulties; that of running a school workshop to each of the thousands of primary schools is a bewildering one. The craft-training which teachers have received all these five years and more may have to run to waste. The idea behind the new proposal is that education through craft or even education-cum-craft is not the goal of elementary education. It is a complete departure from basic education, which has till now been the State's policy. The half-day schooling should be decided upon, after the formulation of the aim and goal of elementary education, the duration in years and the content to be imparted. The content cannot be merely the three R's; we cannot eschew the play-activities that have been in vogue all these years. Children cannot sit for three hours at a stretch in school. The Report on Education in Burma

of the UNESCO experts defines the minimum content of primary school education, which has to be taught for five years, a year being of 200 days of 5½ hours each. A minimum four-hour-day, with a midday interval, seems to me to be absolutely necessary for imparting sound elementary education. The existing basic schools are already unpopular, for an impression prevails in the minds of parents that literacy and the three R's do not receive as much importance as the cleaning campaign and the *takli*-spinning. Children from basic schools find their admission into secondary schools difficult, as their attainments in linguistic and other tests are found not up to the mark. The existing basic school curriculum needs revision. The transition from basic schools to secondary schools must be made smooth. Again, the view prevails in rural areas that the education imparted in rural areas during the first five years of school life should not differ much from that in urban areas. There is a craze, of the right type, I think, for more and better education everywhere; and the curtailment of educational facilities in duration or content in rural areas will not be appreciated. Education is not a toy to be played with, but a precious tool to be wisely handled for the development of the all-round personality, i. e., the physical, mental and moral faculties of the nation's children. The half-day schooling will not be helpful in achieving this objective, and is not a matter for experimentation at all.

I desire to emphasise that nationalisation of elementary education for five standards for children of the age-group 5-10 or 6-11 years should be the immediate objective and is the only way to achieve universalisation of free elementary education.

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Manager,

THE EDUCATIONAL REVIEW

Goddard College: An American Experiment in Education

By LEONARD B. ABOHER, JR. (From *The Christian Science Monitor*)

THE state of Vermont, in the northeastern part of the United States, from its earliest days has played an important role in furthering educational development. It was Vermont which gave the United States its first medical school and its first teacher's college; more recently, it was Vermont which brought forth Bennington College, the Putney School, and the Woodstock Country School—each in its own way pushing forward educational frontiers. Also, Vermont is the birthplace of John Dewey, the dean of American philosophers and educators, whose thinking has had a distinct influence upon Goddard College—one of the state's latest experiments in education.

Goddard is a small college, having an enrollment of approximately 125 students. The faculty numbers 20 and average classes are of eight to ten. A normal student programme includes three courses. Goddard College is dedicated to the theory that what one learns, one is, and thus school should be essentially an education for living. Books, lectures, demonstrations can supply the person with information, but only when that information has become part of his own personality has he really learned it. The good teacher rarely tells; he helps his students find out things for themselves. Tests and examinations do not measure this kind of learning, because the only true test is in action and behaviour.

The Goddard plan makes the whole college community a learning situation, with small classes, individual counselling, work experiences and community government all playing a part. Work is offered in sociology, psychology, philosophy, economics, history, government, conservation, education, the physical sciences, the life sciences, languages, literature, art, music and drama. The heaviest student demand is in literature, psychology, education and government.

Democracy as a way of life is evident to the visitor to Goddard as he talks with the students, the faculty, and the maintenance staff, as he visits in classrooms and listens to discussions in which the instructor and the students are equal and in which there is a free exchange of ideas as the group seeks to reach an understanding of a problem.

Goddard's community government gets its power from the college's Board of Trustees. Its province is the daily life of the college community, for which it makes and enforces regulations, sets standards, and levies a yearly tax of \$ 12. Tax money pays for recreation and occasionally buys permanent equipment to make college life easier and more enjoyable.

The community government functions through meetings of the whole college community, held twice a month, and through a number of special purpose committees—legislative, judiciary, and executive arms, a recreation planning group, a committee on educational policy, a group to plan and supervise the work programme through which community members contribute 10 hours a week in work toward the maintenance of the college. Every member of the college, whether student or member of the teaching, administrative, or maintenance staffs, may attend the semi-monthly community meetings, and every one has an equal voice and vote.

Faculty and students are co-citizens at Goddard. Typical of the self-regulation the community has imposed upon itself are by-laws limiting smoking to fire-protected areas and setting quiet hours. Community by-laws are considered to have the strength of the more usual administrative rulings on such matters.

At Goddard, the Educational Policies Committee, elected by the community, is constantly surveying the entire educational programme, and it keeps in close touch with both the courses being offered and the instructors who teach them. There are no fixed academic requirements for admission to the college. The president of Goddard, Dr. Royce Stanley Pitkin, says; "We are not too interested in what a candidate for admission has studied in high (secondary) school. What we want to know is how he studies, and what kind of person he is and can be."

There is no fixed curriculum at Goddard. During the first two years the student is free to explore in any field of knowledge that interests him. In the last two years, when he is a candidate for the Bachelor of Arts degree, he specialises in a self-chosen field. Teaching is tailored to the individual needs of the student. There are no grades and no examinations. A student, with the aid of his faculty counsellor, evaluates his work and his progress, to determine whether he is ready to go on to advanced studies.

One of Goddard College's most zealously maintained theories is that listening to lectures is not necessarily learning. Thus, free discussion, in which the instructor is chiefly the resource person and the leader who sees that the discussion sticks to the subject, is one of the mainsprings of the Institution's educational programme. Successful democracy is absolutely dependent upon free discussion. Such technique requires wide and extensive reading on the part of the student. Thus the library becomes, not a depository of knowledge, but a very vital working core in the democratic educational programme. By their facility for thinking on their feet and for discussing

pertinent problems intelligently, Goddard students and graduates stand out in any gathering.

This unique college evolved from an idea conceived in the 1930's by its president Dr. Pitkin, who today is known affectionately to faculty and students alike as Tim. Dr. Pitkin formerly was principal of Goddard seminary, an old and honoured secondary school in Vermont; after some years in this position, Dr. Pitkin decided that a college, such as he envisioned, would be more useful than a secondary school, however good. A number of prominent educators and influential laymen agreed with him, and in 1938 Goddard College was officially organised.

The new college had, at its inception, only a library of about 3,000 books and a small sum in cash. For a campus, the trustees went deeply into debt to buy a 200-acre estate on a high hill near the town of Plainfield, Vermont, and the 11-year process of converting a farm into a college was begun. The cow barn eventually became the college cafeteria, recreation hall, administration offices and campus theatre. The bull barn was remodelled into the library.

Today, nearly 14 years after its organisation, Goddard College still has no capital endowment and no reserve fund worthy of the name. It is supported almost entirely by fees paid by students.

But Goddard College is proving that a good college education can be achieved without ivy-covered walls and elaborate buildings. Its graduates themselves become —by precept and example—advocates of the theory that "Democracy is an active daily way of life," and today are winning distinction for themselves and for their college.

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Manager.

THE EDUCATIONAL REVIEW.

Value of Language in National Education

BY SRI S. CHAKRAVARTI, B. A., A. M. I. B. E., *Madras.*

THE infant democracy of the Republic of India is too young to recollect what are national thoughts. The national leaders also do not indicate what language medium out of all languages in India would foster the growth of national education. There are two types of national leaders, and let us start with the first.

In this land of different cultures, languages tend to emphasise differences and then attempt to gather rationally an artificial unity which looks like a game of school boys attempting to locate from the shadows falling on the wall a plaything. Finding in reality this to be unavailing effort, some national leaders could not help starting with the doctrine that India can never become a nation; and out of the many languages, no national thoughts, either individually or collectively, could possibly arise. Then, they begin direct action excluding other Indian languages in the name of nationalism, while at the same time expecting that such negative activity would develop in their own mother tongue national thoughts. But this game seems to indicate that political demands are made on cultural levels, and there ought to be some other language which is not a national thing, but has introduced this conflict without being related to Indian nationalism. What that language is any boy can understand, and that is the English language.

In the history of India, either ancient or modern, the people, although illiterate in the sense that they cannot read or write, have never insisted in one voice that any cultured people should quit India. But the demand has been made about the English by Indian citizens speaking different languages and belonging to different cultures and, such a phenomenon could never have happened in case the English are cultured people in the sense Indians understand what culture is. Why has such a political

demand been made with all the cultural forces even inhibiting the national tendency of cultured people? It is because English is not a national thing. English culture seems to represent a sort of political ego with a cultural defence mechanism, and it has unconsciously tended to grow political demands on cultural levels, a thing unheard of in the annals of Indian history before.

To those Indians who think that English is a thing of beauty and a joy for ever, Hindustani gives these silent thoughts. Are Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam related to Hindustani or to English? How can I be nationally important at the centre without permitting other Indian languages to find their own level at the extremities even as water finds its own level? How can the centre impose on the extremities even in a symbolic form? Am I not something real—of course I may not be rational at present? It is just possible that when Hindustani becomes the national language of India, then the international language of English would have been known as the last resort of imperial memories and has been the unconscious background indicating uncultured demonstrations by cultured citizens of India.

Therefore, national leaders should consider now that culture is not a thing but a relation. Then, they will be aware of English memories coming out of Indian minds to breathe the fresh air of Republican freedom. Indian pedagogues have often been called upon to get into such a pioneering enterprise, when, due to circumstances beyond their control, culture has got stuck up on political levels as a thing.

It might be that when Hindustani becomes the national language, then political demands on cultural levels might also be things of the past. But the fact that the English language has all along been the specific determination of antinational

activity would be revealed to all cultured citizens in India. They will also find out that voluntary withdrawal of the British from India is not a miracle, but the consciousness of British culture representing political altruism.

As the British have left these Indian shores, they have grown confident of the fact that Imperialism has established a cultural hold on the people of India, and English language will be there to contain national facts with imperial memories. The present conflict on cultural levels in India does not arise from national facts of freedom, but points out that imperial memories are in the process of elimination.

Ever since the British have established a hold through their altruistic culture in India and in the Eastern countries, cultural memories all over the East have grown into historical facts, getting into the negative drive to exclude one culture from another through nationalism, eliminating one language and preferring a diplomatic nomenclature, and introducing an element of political conflict among the cultured peoples of the East. Eastern historians find the missing link in the English language, as they attempt to reconcile the origin of cultural conflict among minority and majority cultures throughout the eastern hemisphere. The English spirit seems to say: "I am the origin of all national things in India and the East, and I am also the destruction of all national relations in Eastern culture."

Educationists know that boys and girls are normally unwilling to go to school and the compulsory primary education has inhibited all national memories in children. While they are dragging their legs on the road, these boys and girls meet the cultured politicians who divert their attention to some writing on the wall and ask them to learn this language or that language and boycott other languages.

Even the parent at home finds that political demands are made in the English language. The teacher regards national

education as a means for learning politics and not culture. The Heads of Educational Institutions and Universities appear very rational in English, but do not live up to their cultural reality. All blame Hindustani for not being so attractive as the internationally manifest English, but Hindustani has come to indicate that English is the origin of cultural inhibition in India, a symptom of aggression in Indian culture and has given national anxiety for all the citizens in the Republic of India. Then, the rationale of Hindustani would become real.

Hindustani might as well be compared to a cultural broom that could only get at the English cobwebs and restore freedom to Indian culture.

In every Indian home, the joint-family is disintegrating; brothers are quarrelling as if they are not blood relations, sons are indifferent to fathers and hang on to English teachers, wives are demanding separation in English language, and cultural groups and communities have got into the mood of political crusaders. It will be superfluous to add what respect and regard boys and girls have towards teachers and education. In case English has been the pioneer of this sort of national education, then some other Indian language like Hindustani should re-educate Indian culture.

Then, there are the second type of national leaders who expect to collect sales tax from the movement of Hindustani. They are the sons of Bharat, tracing their descent from the Sun and the Moon; they are industrialists penny-wise in exports but pound-foolish in imports; and they are anthropologists who argue that since culture and capital have started with a capital "C", they can also make out the last "e" capital to their needs and desires. But nobody is on solid ground on political levels, and the cultural past does not carry political memories along with it; on the contrary, only when politics is buried, culture takes its rise and not otherwise.

Therefore, culture in India should beware the imperial nature of any language. Not that Indians should not learn the international language, but English should never be nationally important. National thoughts can never emerge from an international thing, but from national relations among the languages in India. National education involves education through various languages in India, and national culture includes constant vigilance over English from imposing political demands on cultural levels.

The readers might ask why English is used to affirm the value of language in national education. Just as a thing is a relation, so national language is also related to an international language. The people in Great Britain are also entangled in international cobwebs of their own language aggression and have lost their national freedom as an international thing. Let them also beware that language is a friend and not a monopoly, and an international thing represents former memories of imperial past playing upon their reflective national consciousness.

A B C of a New Teacher

By SRI D. PURUSHOTHAM, *Chittoor.*

WHEN anyone views this topsy-turvy world in the right perspective, by standing on his head, he will now see a vast number of young teachers—trained and untrained—tasting their first experience of professional teaching, unguided and all alone. The teacher should know that he is there primarily to learn, as learning is like rowing up-stream. A pupil cannot be taught to read, but he may be confronted by an imaginative reading situation. This is why he should know the children individually and the environment; even at the risk of neglecting the syllabus and disregarding the results. He should have no prejudices or prefixed notions. He should think subjectively; feel instinctively; react protectively; and elevate emotionally, as far as his children are concerned.

A new teacher should know the first Fiddles (i. e., the intellectual and moral leaders) among the pupils by means of a series of free conversations in the classroom and by observing them in their unguarded moments, when the brake is off. The intellectual leaders can be fished out by employing the Standard Tests, but the results of such tests are informative and not definitive. He can also add to his information the opinions of his associates. In

the absence of standard tests of character of sufficient reliability, his researches into intellectual sphere will, however, afford him some help in knowing who the 'moral victors' are. Generally, the true leaders will be found slightly above the average in mental make-up.

After knowing the leaders, "the new knowledge hawker" should know how to work best in co-operation with the partly baked youths. One cannot applaud with one hand. Co-operation is the road to discipline. The teacher, through the leaders, should pick up and weave threads of variant calibre. To attempt to woo the class *enbloc* means to forfeit the right to know his children as individuals, and this is better than trying to know them individually, which may land him in disillusion. But some "narrow necked-bottles" do stay out of the net cast. The beginner should not get puzzled or outwitted by the wayward, the rebellious, the dreamy, the geniuses and the delinquents who may drift unnoticed or unvalued or neglected. But on that score, he cannot give up the struggle. A studied neglect is, frequently, the finest method of winning them.

Disregard of syllabus does not mean a happy-go-lucky conduct of the school work,

Every school or class has its own tradition, linguisms, localisms and somersaultisms, and he has to follow the existing hackneyed track, however abominable it may be, before effecting any alterations for several good reasons. The progress of education rests on experimentation, when done after searching investigation, knowing that the child has only one school life. He experiments not on lifeless machines, but on purposeful human beings. The teacher's attitude, his gestures, his likes and dislikes, his preferences and his idiosyncracies have to be assimilated by the children, before there can be any worthwhile cooperation between the two.

No teacher stands alone. He is all eyes and ears. He should also study the confirmed reactions to the methods in vogue in his pupils. He should not only discover the possible reasons for the poor response; but also find out the potent remedies. Any change in the technique, introduced gradually, should openly appear that it was made on the initiative of the pupils. Accordingly, he should prepare his lessons. The success of a lesson depends upon how much the children participate in it, and not at all upon the personal efficiency of the 'jail warden' or 'smooth-tongued trimmer'. His scheme of work demands the long view, if not the longer one.

The innocent pedagogue has to face the setting and marking devils. His business is not so much with the pen and ink ghosts, but with the living personalities. He should know the disparity between authority (superior or inferior) and discipline which spells cooperation. There is that unavoidable drudgery in school work, and he has to combat it with the missiles of engaging interest. In matters of discipline, he must be upright and unbiassed. He is not a *guru* dealing with one child, when the child is the school itself. Once martinetts had their day, but not today.

It is expected that a teacher should partake in other school activities. The school society is not only of value to him, he is of value to it. Societies do not mean

extra monetary contributions; as there are many calls on the pocket of the child of today. The present schools are fast becoming match-manufacturing factories; blood-suckers if not slaughter-houses. Some think that any fool can become a teacher. But such fools are either idealistic fools or feckless ones. But let every teacher try to manufacture a lesser number of fools in this mad world, which will be something without them.

The 'star-crossed teacher' is a man among boys, and a boy among men. He needs recreation and time for social duties and for research work. All is fish that comes into the teacher's pocket. He must be strong enough to withstand the hard knocks from the multifarious Acts, Codes and Rules of education. He richly needs holidays; if not, he will become a sponge or a string bag or a sand-glass or a Moghul diamond. If iron enters into his soul, it is something, but not dead chalk and dust. He should have the teaching personality. He cannot escape his personality, nor conceal it, as he is not a lamp-post or a wall-peg.

There is a type, a red hot enthusiast who puts all his energy into teaching, who tickles, directs, controls, and compels and finishes his work and shows tangible results. Well and good so far. The pupils do follow him on the surface. There 'the new colt' robs the pupils of their personalities, by denying them the right to exercise them. There is another type of teacher, who relies on charm, which is commendable, and when he plays upon it too much, disaster chills him. There is another type, who adopts a deliberately negative attitude, which is abhorrent, and thus he simply withholds from the child what is his due. What is personality, if not the expression of character plus something else? Character is trainable and attainable, but the nature of its expression is beyond his control.

A new teacher may be happy because of the good he is doing and knows he is doing, in 'the shed for husking apparatus.' A knowledge hawker, with insurmountable ideals will become a misfit or indifferent

Another with ideals may simply retreat from reality. A third one with practical ideals, may shoot at the bull's eye. He is the best adept, who can adopt and adapt. One who preserves the intimate relationship between the ideal and actual is the real *guru*. Some have ideals only for the pleasure of scuttling them. Every teacher faces depression as he is enveloped by outdated traditions, empty encomiums, apology of emoluments, restrictions and regimentations. The greater the idealism, the deeper the depression. Such ones suffer an eclipse as on the race course. But the teacher should welcome depression, as it is the darkest hour before dawn.

The beginner is on trial by all, including himself. What makes him too hot or quit? Is it the type of school, or the wrong children or subjects or his inability or what? It is better to light a candle than curse the darkness. Success can be achieved by constant thought, faith, prayer, endeavour, intensive and extensive study, by self-sacrifice, analytical approach and by abiding and intelligent interest in the Whole Child and all crowned by LOVE.

He who can does, he who cannot, teaches.

Secondary Education Commission—What For?

(Continued)

II

In my last article, I had stated that the Government of India seemed to be planning for two systems of education, one pre-basic, Basic, and Post-Basic, leading to rural university for the masses and another, Primary Education, Secondary Education leading to the University for the classes. In order to find out whether my surmise was correct, I wrote to the Minister of Education with the Government of India, to clarify the point. I give below the reply (A).

(A) No. D, 1268/52-B, I.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
Government of India.

New Delhi 8, the...16th June, 1952.

Dear Shri Aiyangar,

1. Please refer to your d. o. letter dated June 2, 1952 addressed to Maulana Sahib, enclosing a copy of your article "Secondary Education Commission.—What for?"

2. I may say at the very outset that there has been no through examination so far of the problems pertaining to Secondary

Education in the country and the Planning Commission has rightly described this stage of education as the weakest link in our educational system. A new factor which makes it even more important to survey the entire position of Secondary Education is the development of Basic education. In several states, a stage has been reached where students are completing a seven or eight years, basic course and some decision has to be taken regarding their future. A fairly uniform system of Primary Education may be suitable for children, but with the coming of adolescence, a diversification of courses becomes essential, as this is the stage when differences in aptitude and interest begin to be clearly shown. Further, the primary schools draw their teachers, and universities their students, from the Secondary Schools. If these are inefficient, the quality of education at all stages, is bound to be adversely affected.

3. I trust that the observations made above will convince you of the necessity for such a commission.

Yours Sincerely,

(Sd). K. L. JOSHI,
Under-secretary.

SHRI N. KUPPUSWAMI AYYANGAR, M.A., L.T.,
Retd. Lecturer, Training College,
Trivandrum, Ad. Ha. Ely. School, Vaduvur.
(Tanjore Dt.)

It will be seen that it is vague and not to the point. It seems to me that the Government of India do contemplate two systems, but are unwilling to own it until it is endorsed by the proposed Secondary Education Commission. Whatever it may be, I have again written requesting a definite reply to the questions I had raised. I give below a copy of that letter also. (B) I think it is better to deal with the undesirability of having two systems after I get a reply to my last letter.

Copy of letter (B)

Dear Shri Joshi,

Your letter No. D 1268/52 B. I. dated 16-6-52 in reply to mine addressed to Maulana Sahib. I must say it has not enlightened me on any of the questions that I have raised in my article. You use 3 terms, viz., "Basic Education" "Primary Education" and "Secondary Education". What each term exactly connotes is not clear. The last two terms are well defined terms in educational literature. In the absence of any explanation to the contrary, one has to assume that they are used in their usual meaning, i. e., Primary Education means education up to 11 and Secondary Education, Education between 11 and entrance to the University. If this is so, the term "Basic Education" is not used by you in the same sense as it was used by Gandhiji. I have quoted enough from Gandhiji's writings in the article sent to you to show that he intended "Basic Education" to be of the Matriculation standard so as to include what now goes under the name of Primary and Secondary Education.

I request you to let me know what exactly the Government of India means by those 3 terms.

Secondly, I do not know exactly how far the Sargent Scheme holds the field now. But from newspaper reports of the speeches and pronouncements made by the top rank-

ing men in the Ministry of Education including Maulana Sahib, I am definitely of the impression that the Sargent Scheme is the main guide except in a few instances like 40 years' time required to complete the introduction of free and compulsory education between the ages of 6 and 14 throughout India, and the place of 'Hindi' in our educational system. The paras under 'Basic Education' and 'Secondary Education' in the Five Year Plan give the same impression.

For instance, in the Sargent Scheme, Basic Education is identified with the present primary and Middle School Education and is intended for the age group 6 to 14. In the five year plan also, it is stated that Basic Education is intended for the age group 6—14. So it may be inferred that the standard of Basic Education as envisaged in the five year plan is only that of the present Middle School as is given in the Sargent Scheme and not that of the Matriculation as intended by Gandhiji.

Again, in the Sargent Scheme, first five years of schooling called Junior Basic is common to all pupils. After that pupils who pass in the examination are sent to High Schools which corresponds to the present Secondary Schools. Those who fail are sent to Senior Basic Schools. The products of the Senior Basic Schools may go in for higher education provided for them by the Government such as Adult Schools. Thus the Sargent Scheme provides for two parallel systems of Education; one Junior Basic, High School to University; another, Junior Basic, Senior Basic to Adult Schools.

In the Five Year Plan under Basic Education, it is stated that the several stages of Basic Education are pre-basic, basic, post-basic, teacher's training, and when this becomes possible, a rural university.

Under Secondary Education, it is stated that Secondary Education is the weakest link in the educational chain. But it is a link between what two things is not given. In your letter you talk of Primary Edu-

cation and the need for a diversification of courses with the coming of adolescence. The Sargent Scheme also is to provide a variety of courses extending over a period of at least 5 years after the age of 11. Therefore, it may be fairly inferred that the Secondary Education contemplated in the First Five Year Plan is a link between Primary School (Junior Basic) and the University. Therefore, it is a fair inference that what is contemplated in the Five Year Plan is the provision for two different systems of education—one pre-basic, basic, post-basic to rural university; another Primary School (Five Year course), Secondary Education to the University. This is only a modification of the two systems contemplated in the Sargent Scheme. I wish to know definitely whether the Five Year Plan contemplates two systems as I have described above.

Of course, you state in your letter that Secondary Education is partly intended for those who have completed the 7 or 8 years Basic course. If it is so, there should be a Post-Basic Education Commission and

not a Secondary Education Commission. This also requires elucidation.

In conclusion, I would request you to give a definite reply as to what the Government of India contemplates with regard to:—

1. the standard of basic education, whether it is a 7 or 8 year course;
2. whether it contemplates two systems of education—one Pre-basic, Basic, Post-Basic to Rural University and another Primary Education, Secondary Education to the University;
3. whether the 7 or 8 year course of Basic Education is to be common to all and Secondary Education is only another name for the Post Basic course.

As I wish to have an authoritative answer to the questions, I would request you to consult top-men in the Ministry including Maulana Sahib before you reply.

(Sd) N. Kuppaswami.

(To be continued)

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Editorial

CONVOCATION addresses are primarily intended to remind graduates of the ideals which they must follow in later life and to inspire them with the necessary zeal and enthusiasm. But it is usual for the

distinguished educationists and politicians who are called upon mostly to deliver such addresses, to utilise them for airing their own views about educational and political controversies. Speeches of that kind get headlined in the press: but they leave the new graduates puzzled, bewildered and sometimes excited as well. The Rev. Father Jerome D' Souza, formerly Principal of the Loyola College, Madras, and now Director of the Indian Institute of Social Order, Poona, wisely eschewed educational and political polemics in his address to the Madras graduates on the 21st August. He did not tell his youthful audience that they would have been better off under a different kind of educational system or a different type of social order. He merely described to them the situation in which they and their country found themselves today and called their attention to the fundamental ideals loyalty to which was essential if they were to serve themselves and their country aright. Stressing the responsibilities of the leadership at home and abroad which would fall on University graduates, he declared: "For this purpose, it is essential that in our entire education certain fundamental attitudes in consonance with our historic spirit and our present day mission, should be sedulously cultivated: that the men who step out of the portals of the Universities and take up their appointed tasks as formed men should be fixed in those attitudes and imbued with those ideals, I mean the ideals which foster peace, which foster democratic liberty, social justice and communal harmony." Later on in the address, he traced them to "the eternal verities of God and soul and righteousness and harmony among men" standing "immovable whatever the violence of the

passing storms." It was his earnest advice: "In moments of moral crisis, let me beg you with all the earnestness I can command: Make not haste in time of clouds. Come to no irrevocable decision, do not throw to the winds the lessons of a lifetime and the wisdom of the ages." There was the authentic Indian touch in the comparison of spiritual crises to a lake agitated by a storm and thus rendered incapable of reflecting the scenery around. "The storm," he went on, "will pass, the winds will subside, the tormented foliage of the trees will be lulled to rest, and over the luminous surface of those waters, flower and tree, contour of mountain and colour of sky will stand once again reflected." In other words, in and through controversies and conflicts, we must preserve our faith in God and man and in eternal moral principles.

Dr. D' Souza glanced at some of the evils and dangers to be guarded against—corruption in politics, corruption in manners, the tendency to interpret the secular state as a state indifferent, if not hostile, to religion, and the introduction of provincial and communal rivalries in academic circles. He showed the graduates however through a survey of history that India had ample stores of vital energy and that they had every reason to be hopeful about the ultimate success of the new synthesis that she was attempting with the culture of the West.

Altogether Father D' Souza's address is a pointed tract for the times, stressing ideals and values apt to be forgotten in the heat of passion roused by contending ideologies.

In the June issue of the *Educational Quarterly*, published by the Government of

India, Sri J. P. Naik has written interestingly about the Janata College, a new institution which is at once a rural school, a community centre, a research organisation investigating and experimenting on methods and techniques

used for making it the life and soul of the village, and a training school for rural teachers. "The Janata College," he writes, "ought to be developed as an indigenous experiment suited to our peculiar needs and conditions. It certainly has very close parallels abroad: the community college of U. S. A: the village or country college of England: and the Folk High Schools of Denmark. It should borrow freely from these great institutions. But instead of being a mere facile imitation of these foreign models, it should be evolved on our own lines in the light of our own experience, research and experimentation." Many of the functions that Sri J. P. Naik attributes to the Janata College were served by the village temple in south India in the middle ages. The temple housed the local school and college: it was the town hall, the stage and the concert theatre. It was often the bank and the registry of documents. Adult education was its special job. In south India even now some temples, properly encouraged, may be in a position to carry on some of these duties. Apart from this, however, we are convinced that some institution like the Janata College is absolutely necessary to regenerate the village. These who plan it have to take care that it has its roots in the soil and that its activities are so conceived as to capture the imagination of the people and enthuse national sentiment.

Replying to the civic address presented by the Salem Municipal Council on August 3,

Sri C. Subramaniam, our Finance Minister, made an important disclosure. He said that the reform of the present scheme of education which was mechanical and unsuited to the country's needs was engaging the serious attention of the Madras cabinet, and that it was being felt that decentralisation in the matter of education to regional areas, the latter finding the necessary moneys for the expenditure and looking to the State Government for allotment of moneys only in special cases would be a desirable step to be taken.

The proposal is rather revolutionary, and it has roused misgivings in some sections of the press. We have of course to wait for fuller details before we can be sure of the implications of the plan. We are sure, however, that the Government have no intention of giving up their responsibility for the spread of education. It seems to us however that the English administrative set up—to which we referred in a note last month—may be in the mind of the Government. It may be worth while considering whether greater decentralisation may not inspire a widespread resurgence of local initiative and local enthusiasm. The Vidya Mandir scheme, tried in Madhya Pradesh in 1937—39, is a well conceived experiment in that direction. We shall watch with interest how the Madras Ministry proposes to meet the ever increasing demand for educational expansion with the limited funds at their disposal.

It is agreed practically on all hands that God made man: but some would add that

The
Philosophy of
Clothes

the tailor makes the gentleman. An enterprising dress-maker is using this ancient adage, (*minus* the articles), as an advertising slogan

inside the city buses. News is now to hand that our educational authorities are worried as to how much the tailor—or at least dress—contributes to the making of a teacher. The Divisional Inspector of Schools, Madurai, has recently had occasion to note that teachers lack a distinctive dress and are often indistinguishable from boys. In a circular he has pointed out that it is quite desirable that teachers should dress in a way that will distinguish them from boys and add to their appearance. His practical suggestions are that if they wear *dhoties*, and shirts, they should also wear *angavastram*, and they should avoid half sleeved shirts or letting their shirts hang loosely over their trousers.

The general lowering and confusion of standards following independence has affected the pedagogic dress also. Teachers have never been noted for being up to-date in fashion, but till recently they did dress

in a different way from their pupils. In our anxiety to proclaim our freedom from our foreign rule we have broken many healthy conventions. And among these must be included the preference shown now-a-days by teachers for the most informal kind of dress. And this tendency is considerably strengthened by the thoroughly inadequate salaries they are paid and the soaring prices of textiles. Still it is not at all undesirable that headmasters have been requested to persuade their assistants to wear dress "of an accepted standard".

Last month, in a thought-provoking talk in the B. B. C., Sir Richard Livingstone

American compared the American
Vs. British Secondary School and the
Education Universities with their
British counterparts. The

American system seemed to him more successful in social education, the British more competent in intellectual training. The American school curriculum included a vast number of subjects—all of them intimately connected with American life, but most of them of dubious academic value. The American system of grouping together boys on the principle of age, instead of

academic achievements, appeared to him to put a premium on mediocrity. In the result, the American boy found himself socially more and intellectually less mature when he entered the university than his British counterpart. On the whole, the American system looked like the luxury of a rich nation.

The post-independence educational reforms in India do not reveal as yet any coherent purpose or consistent pattern. But one wonders whether one cannot discern in them all a tendency to move from the British to the American type. As in America, in our province also, the clever boys are fast becoming an underprivileged class. Quality is being steadily sacrificed, not merely for quantity, but also for the ostensible purpose of social justice. Whether the lowering of standards in all departments of national life this will lead to, and the damage to the national economy that it will cause, can be afforded by a poor nation like India is a problem that requires the earnest consideration of our policy-makers. The most poignant irony of the situation is that at the end of it, social justice may not have been promoted at all.

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